

The Philatelic Communicator

Writers Unit No. 30 of the
American Philatelic Society

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The President's Message

The annual STAMPSHOW Writers Unit Breakfast on August 28 was a success. I'd like to thank Steve Rod for his continuing efforts to renew interest and obtain greater participation in this breakfast. I'll have more to report on the breakfast in the next issue.

This year's door-prize drawing was one of the best ever. Steve Rod and Ken Lawrence solicited donations. I was disappointed that only John Hotchner responded to my appeal to members for literature donations to the drawing. I hope more members will donate next year.

I also want to thank all those members who provided material for the first portion of the Writers Handbook that appeared in the last issue. There was a lot of good information contained in those articles. I hope that other experienced writers and editors will provide information to help those who are wondering about how to accomplish their tasks more easily.

If all went well, Joe's changeover to the new era of computer publishing has been accomplished, and we're looking at the results in this issue. The 5.0 version of Word Perfect that he is using is one of the three or four top-line word processors, and approaches what is possible with the PC heavyweights such as Xerox Ventura Publisher and Aldus Page Maker, but about a third the price. And with the laser printer, the text output should be excellent.

And, for all of you, tell any of your philatelic friends who are involved in putting words on paper for their society, newspaper column, or in any other way in philatelic editing, writing, or publishing about WU30. We're here to help.

BOB DE VIOLINI

The Scandal Story

BY TOM MAEDER

This report is a case study of the role of the philatelic press in handling rumors and allegations.

In the fall of 1988, Boston stamp dealer Jack Molesworth circulated xerox copies of fourteen repaired stamps, illustrating them "before and after." All the stamps were 19th Century classics, most had allegedly been purchased by Lawrence and Richard Sachs at Robert A. Siegel auctions between 1984 and 1987, all had faults (of one description or another), and all were re-auctioned in less than twelve months at Steve Ivy auctions with brand new, "clean bill of health" Philatelic Foundation certificates. None of the certificates noted the faults which the Siegel house had scrupulously noted in its auction catalog, nor did the Ivy auction catalog note faults or any evidence of repair. Molesworth said he was concerned that the pool of classic stamps was being polluted. His memorandum was titled "The Tip of the Iceberg."

Joseph J. Puleo Jr., "Peck's Bad Boy of Philately," ran a provocative article in his sporadically issued paper, *The Stamper Monthly*. He alleged a conspiracy among the Sachs brothers; Daniel Bagby, who is a stamp repair expert; and Charles Shreve of Steve Ivy Philatelic Auctions. Puleo's story claimed that all of these parties knew they were re-auctioning repaired and inaccurately described stamps.

At INTERPEX '89 in March at Madison Square Garden, the floor was abuzz with talk about the article. I engaged Charles Shreve in conversation. He (and everyone else quoted in

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The Philatelic Communicator

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this report) knew that I was gathering notes for an article. I asked him what his reaction to the Puleo article was. "Absolutely false. It's possible that an altered stamp may get inaccurately described in an auction catalog, but it's an oversight resulting from so many lots to deal with, not from dishonesty."

Many of the PF certificates that accompanied the lots supposedly consigned by the Sachses had the bottom "clipped" (name of the person who submitted the lot to the Foundation cut off). Isn't this unusual? "It's not unusual at all. A lot of people do it, for a lot of different reasons. They may simply seek privacy. They may not want another auction house to know that they are using us."

Why are all these "doctored" stamps ending up in Ivy Auctions? "Ask the Sachses. Probably because we get higher realizations."

Do you think that a lot of the dealers our here on the floor believe the Puleo accusations about you? "Yes." Why? "It may sound arrogant, but they're jealous. We have an expanding, successful operation. I'm jealous of Christie's; I wish we were as successful as they are. These fellows are jealous of me."

Three different dealers at the show urged me not to write about this. Two of them are in the American Stamp Dealers Association hierarchy. One told me that the FBI was investigating the situation, and so was the ASDA. They all said that the Puleo story had factual errors, but none of the three would be specific about what the errors were. One dealer cautioned, "You're messing around with a lot of heavy-hitters." Each of the three requested not to be quoted by name.

I have kept clippings from Linn's Stamp Collector, Stamp Wholesaler, Stamps, and Merkeil's that relate to this story. What did they know, when did they know it, and how did they report it?

The Puleo story has been ignored, or treated very cautiously. In talking with publishers and editors, the common thread is a disdain for Puleo, personally and professionally.

Michael Laurence at Linn's said that "Puleo is a 'tainted source'; that made us much less likely to pay attention to the story." (Puleo was expelled from APS, has a Cali-

fornia criminal conviction for a check fraud scheme, and himself advertised a stamp regumming service.) *Linn's* intends to give no publicity to Puleo."

Laurence was also miffed that the same *Stamper* issue published an interview with him that had never taken place. It apparently was a parody or lampoon, but could easily have been mistaken for a real interview. Laurence quite candidly remarked that he had had a strong personal reaction against Puleo and the whole *Stamper* issue as a result, and in hindsight, perhaps was wrong not to cover the story.

Laurence had known about the Molesworth xeroxes before they were reported in *Stamper*, saying that he had seen them about 18 months before. He spoke fondly of Molesworth, saying he had known him for thirty years, and had bought stamps from him while still in college. However, Laurence maintained that Molesworth has a bias against auction houses in general, and Steve Ivy in particular.

Laurence opined that Molesworth's charges against Steve Ivy could have equally been leveled against any auction house.

Steve Ivy Auctions has a one-page ad in *Linn's* every issue. When asked if this had anything to do with *Linn's* silence, Laurence commented that the newspaper has about \$6,000,000 in advertising per year, and that no one advertiser accounts for as much as one percent of total revenue. *Linn's* job, he says, is to report the news, and they certainly would not prostitute themselves for one percent.

I asked Laurence if the apparent problems with Philatelic Foundation certificates didn't warrant a story. He responded: "*Linn's* has 76,000 readers. I'll bet not 500 of them own a stamp with a certificate. Such a story would appeal only to the 'well-heeled' who should know better to begin with."

Then, in a seeming about-face, Laurence noted that a *Linn's* issue two weeks hence would editorialize about the image problem at the Foundation, and make reference to the Sachses. (In May, the Sachses were expelled from the ASDA for conducting their business affairs "in a way that brought disrepute to the trade and lessened public confidence in stamp dealers.")

In summary, Laurence said that *Linn's* needs to be cautious. "We are uniquely in a position to put stamp dealers out of business, and need to be certain of the facts. Of course, if something is a matter of court proceedings, reporting that would protect us from libel."

Dane Claussen, editor at *Stamp Collector* since March, said that his reporting of sensitive stories has been guided by the advice of counsel and the established guidelines of the publisher. Claussen first saw Molesworth's documentation in April 1989, and the story was new to him with Puleo's article, though others at *Stamp Collector* had heard the details earlier.

"We don't traffic in rumors. We hear rumors about lots of people, some of them the most prominent people in philately. You need an indictment before you can safely repeat these rumors. If you have substantial evidence in hand, though, you may publish before there are indictments."

Claussen editorialized in the April 8, 1989, issue: "Scandal Article Raises Serious New Questions." He summarized the Puleo accusations (without mentioning any of the Puleo documentation) with the comment, "The allegations may or may not be true." The editorial moved quickly to the problems at the Foundation, with the interesting observation: "The real villain in the situation is the craze of collectors for superb stamps. Everyone agrees that Philatelic Foundation policies and practices need to be beyond question. However, attacking Foundation scandals, if they exist, is like attacking drug suppliers, rather than the demand in society for drugs."

Was the editorial in keeping with the stated policy of not repeating rumors without indictments? Claussen said that the Puleo story was a news story in itself, and that the editorial used it as a springboard to examine broader questions.

Curiously, I had just received a bulk mail piece from *Stamp Collector* soliciting a subscription: "The News Comes First . . . *Stamp Collector* readers often learn the news from our professional reporters weeks before other publications pick it up. These are some stories collectors read first, and often exclusively, in *Stamp Collector* . . . 'Serious questions raised by claims of fraud involv-

ing Philatelic Foundation' . . ." (signed) Jim
Magruder, Editor and Publisher.

I asked Claussen if Stamp Collector readers really had read the claims of fraud there first. He laughed easily: "The story about the Puleo story broke here first."

The Stamp Wholesaler, a sister publication of Stamp Collector aimed at the trade, editorialized on April 15: "Neither The Stamp Wholesaler nor Stamp Collector will be publishing articles about the situation until legal charges are made or we have proof we can publish in the newspapers and have given the people involved chances to reply . . . I think rumor reporting belongs in supermarket papers with stories about three-headed babies and trials belong in the courts."

Wholesaler publisher Jim Magruder declined comment, noting that I had already spoken to executive editor Dane Claussen, and that Magruder had nothing he wanted to add.

I spoke to editor Al Starkweather at Stamps. I asked him why Stamps has made no mention of the rumors. Did he think the story was newsworthy? Was Charles Shreve's article on expertizing in Stamps a back-door way of defending himself? Starkweather was quite forthcoming, and I thanked him. Two hours later he telephoned me back and said he had been thinking about our conversation, that it was his publisher's policy not to discuss editorial policy, and that all his remarks would have to be off-the-record.

Finally, I spoke to John Dunn at Mekeel's. He said that Mekeel's is an eight-page publication, and he doesn't want to have to compete with the other weeklies on their terms. Consequently, the Puleo story has not been mentioned. Linn's, Dunn says, does a good job of reporting these "problems" in the hobby. However, he's a bit surprised that Linn's hasn't done more with it.

I asked Dunn if his recent article on the Foundation's expertizing rivals, Professional Stamp Expertizing and American Philatelic Expertizing Service, didn't come awfully close to violating his own rule. The problems at the Foundation were hinted at. Dunn said that he had thought twice about it before publishing it.

Like Michael Laurence at Linn's, Dunn is annoyed with Puleo. The Stamper wrote that

there was a silent owner at Mekeel's, without calling first to inquire if it was true. Dunn says it is false. Yet, that has nothing to do with ignoring the Puleo story, Dunn maintains. In fact, he believes that "Puleo's charges about the Foundation are fairly accurate."

Unlike the other editors and publishers, Dunn has a first hand background on this story. Until March 1, 1989, he was Director of Education at the Foundation.

He relates that the Sachs brothers were, numerically, the largest submitters of material to the Foundation. They also were they most active expertizers, and often signed on their own material. He says he first heard rumors about the Sachses from dealers on the outside, and that a number of people at the Foundation had raised questions about them to three succeeding executive directors.

Both Molesworth and Dunn see the problem similarly. There are about 2,000 items submitted monthly--a tremendous work load. It is difficult to assemble experts enough hours to handle it. The Sachs brothers were around a lot, and so were used a lot.

I visited PF headquarters in March and spoke to Peter Robertson, the curator. He oversees the expertizing operations. He said that "cleaning up" stamps is done by everybody, and isn't necessarily illegitimate. He defended the Sachs brothers as knowledgeable experts, and said that signing on your own material wasn't a problem if you were an expert.

On July 5 I phoned him, and asked if he still stood by his high regard for the Sachses. "I have no comment on this or on anything else." I drew a breath, choosing my next question, when he began: "I don't know why people listen to allegations by convicted felons. The most scurrilous individual can make assertions. This has been nothing but sensationalism. There was nothing there to start with. The Foundation will survive. There are lots of legitimate dealers out there doing far worse than the Sachs brothers--closing tears, taking cancels off. Stamps are a whole lot cleaner than coins and antiquities--you should see what goes on there. Besides, the Sachses were expelled from ASDA for not showing up at a meeting."

When I told him that I knew who had brought the charges, and what they were

specifically, he erupted: "Whoever told you that should be brought up on charges; those proceedings are supposed to be secret." Yes, I know, and since this commoner knows, it should be told that the charges relate very closely to what is being discussed here.

Calming down, Robertson defended PF practices. He said the Foundation has an audit committee that periodically double-checks the expertizers' activities. He likened it to working in a bank. Yes, the Sachses did sign on their own material, but about a year and a half ago the practice was changed because experts often "ignored little problems" with their own stamps.

Have any changes occurred at the Foundation as a result of this scandal? "No."

And now some conclusions. I have no ax to grind. I eagerly await my weekly *Linn's* as the philatelic innocent that I am. I bid at auction, and my pulse races a little. I am a "not-so-well-heeled" collector with two stamps with PF certificates, which I have always cherished as a status symbol.

Have the weeklies done us justice on this story?

It is certainly in keeping with the traditions of this society not to accuse falsely, nor to injure someone's good name recklessly. Joe Puleo's accusations against Charles Shreve could not be substantiated from the evidence he had at hand. Things might look amiss, but it is a principle of law that if an innocent explanation could be as reasonably believed as an indicting one, the innocent explanation must be presumed to be true.

However, one gets the impression that disdain for Puleo and *The Stamper* colored the other journals' approach to the story. Mike Laurence said as much. There is almost an unspoken rule that no one will utter Puleo's name. Mekeel's: ". . . a rumor that appeared recently in a stamp publication. . . ." Stamp Collector and Stamp Wholesaler: ". . . a small bi-monthly stamp newspaper . . ."

I showed the Molesworth xeroxes to acquaintances who have above average IQs, but know absolutely nothing about philately. Without any introduction or comment, I said, "Look at these for 10 minutes and tell me what you see." Answer: "Somebody fixed these up so they'd be worth more money." (The xeroxes also noted the prices realized before and after repair.) Yes, friends, it's

that obvious. *Linn's* had these xeroxes long before Puleo did.

Puleo used the xeroxes as the basis for his story. He painted a broad picture of conspiracy that was perhaps libelous--that was probably his fatal flaw. But just because it's Puleo, doesn't mean it's all false.

Without coming to any conclusions about who-did-what-to-whom, there is definitely a story here about sloppy work at the Philatelic Foundation. Nobody needs to be called a crook. Dr. Roberto M. Rosende and the Board of Directors are held in high regard by everyone I talked to--as well-intentioned, honorable people. Yet, with 20,000 certificates issuing yearly, the collecting public deserves to know about the integrity of the process--and where should a collector expect to get such an exploration than from his philatelic weekly?

The Scandal Story II

BY KEN LAWRENCE

Long before the February/March 1989 issue of *The Stamper Monthly* headlined "Stamp Fraud Conspiracy Exposed!" hit the giveaway tables at Garfield-Perry, INTERPEX, and other major stamp shows last spring, unleashing the torrent of gossip and innuendo that continues to this day, Joseph J. Puleo Jr., its alleged author, called to read the lead story to me late one night.

"What do you think of it?" Joe asked.

"If true, it's an interesting story," I said. "But it's irresponsibly written." Ever helpful to any naif of journalism who seeks my advice, I carefully explained that to publish a defamatory story without offering the accused an opportunity for comment (or "no comment") is unconscionable, unethical, and, in court, evidence of malice or reckless disregard of the truth when presented to a libel jury.

"What will you do if Charles Shreve sues you?" I asked.

"I'll just fold *The Stamper* and start something else," he replied.

With that inauspicious beginning, we went on to discuss the details. I knew that the initial allegations had come from Jack Molesworth. But, as I pointed out to Puleo, there were crucial differences between

Molesworth's approach and his. Molesworth's version had circulated as preliminary findings, while Puleo's, with virtually no additional research and only selective use of Molesworth's evidence, was presented as conclusive, even after he had liberally larded the text with allegedlys.

Furthermore, Molesworth's self-interest had been evident, since he is the most vocal and persistent critic of all philatelic auction houses, his major competitors in the classic stamp and cover trade, even though he is more partial to Robert A. Siegel than to the rest. By concealing the source and elevating Molesworth's mere example, Steve Ivy Philatelic Auctions, into the main villain, Puleo had deprived his readers of a crucial measure of the article's truthfulness.

Daniel Bagby, another villain of the story, not mentioned in Molesworth's report, is evidently Puleo's main competitor in the stamp doctoring business. I told Puleo, "As an expert swindler of dealers and collectors, you are undoubtedly able to enlighten the rest of us on this subject." Set a thief to catch a thief. But in this his article was disappointing.

Puleo knows all the tricks of altering cheap stamps to mimic expensive gems, so he ought to be qualified to evaluate another's handiwork. By failing to tell what Bagby had done and how, he squandered his opportunity to impress readers with details of the only subject he is better qualified to explain than the rest of us.

There were other ways he could have enhanced the credibility of his report. One of Steve Ivy's competitors said to me, "When some of your customers buy a lot of spit and consign only gold, you ought to be suspicious of the consignments and check them carefully, no matter what the certificates say."

A comment like that, while not as racy as Puleo's imitation of a supermarket tabloid, would certainly have been more persuasive to me than a dozen screaming headlines charging conspiracy.

On its face, Puleo's article appeared to be shilling business for Professional Stamp Expertizing, a new stamp certifying firm that competes with the Philatelic Foundation and the American Philatelic Expertiz-

ing Service. PSE's full page advertisement appeared in that very same issue of ~~The Stamper~~, and Puleo illustrated the article with a PSE certificate that contradicts a PF opinion of the same stamp.

I called PSE proprietor J. Randall Shoemaker. He said PSE was in no way connected with Puleo's article, editorial, and commentary. When I mentioned the irony of Puleo publishing such a story, given that he is personally responsible for so many of the bad stamps on the market, Shoemaker said, "No question about it."

A few months after Puleo's article appeared, the American Stamp Dealers Association expelled the Sachs brothers on charges brought by Shoemaker. Puleo has copies of the documents presented to ASDA, access denied to legitimate journalists. Shoemaker denies he is Puleo's source, but said, "I understand ASDA leaks like a sieve." At what point does our credulity run out?

Several weeks after ~~The Stamper~~ appeared, the weekly stamp publications began tiptoeing around the story. But by presenting even fewer facts than Puleo had, and even less background on the sources of the allegations and their credibility, the reports were frustrating at best. At ~~Stamp Collector~~, Dane Claussen believes that if bad stamps with good certificates command high prices, collectors have only themselves to blame. At Linn's, Les Winick thinks corrupt expertizing is just a reflection of human nature. At Stamps, Charles Shreve writes, in the face of all the evidence, that expertizing is improving all the time. At Mekeel's, John Dunn won't stoop to Puleo's level, but uses Puleo's report as a pretext for puffing PSE.

Stamp collectors are entitled to better service than this from our press. If we don't begin to get it soon, our hobby will go the way of coin collecting, which has lost more than half of its former adherents. Now that numismatics is permanently plagued by fraud and corruption, and increasingly subject to intervention by the government, ~~Coin World~~ and ~~Numismatic News~~ are not fun to read for the dwindling readership they serve. Our press can save

us from this fate; but the opportunity won't last forever.

Postscript: Since the above was written, some of Joe Puleo's henchmen distributed the September/October issue of **The Stamp** at STAMPSHOW 89 in Anaheim.

Its rehash of the previous issue's main story contains no new information. The appearance of a second bogus "interview" with Michael Laurence suggests that Puleo is out of ideas.

He did manage to compress a record number of lies about me into a scant four column inches, but he probably would have started more collectors clucking had he reported one true item instead: I collect Disneys.

A U.S. Sprint security officer called, concerned that a certain Mr. Pew-low, who had run up quite a bill phoning me from Florida, had failed to pay his bill. I told her Puleo's creditors already had a queue extending from Florida to New York, and thence to Texas, but I wished her well.

Watching the Weeklies

BY ROBERT A. GREENWALD

It has been my observation that there are certain Great Truths in life, laws that one sees in action very frequently, and to which there are few exceptions. For example, there is the Second Law of Thermodynamics, especially the part which states that a system left alone will head inexorably towards chaos unless energy is input. Then there is Parkinson's Law ("Work expands to fit the hands available to do it.") and the Peter Principle ("In a hierarchy, every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence."). As a fourth and final example, there is what I call The Rashomon Effect.

Rashomon, as you may recall, was a prize winning 1950 movie about an episode in the forest: a man leading his wife on an outing is murdered by a bandit, and the woman is raped. The story is told from several vantage points--the wife, the bandit, a woodcutter who happens upon the scene (Rashomon)--and in each telling, there is a new bad guy, and a new hero, and the depiction changes with each shift

of viewpoint. Eventually the viewer concludes that there may not really be an absolute truth.

Rashomon must have been looking over my shoulder when I wrote my last column in these pages about conflict of interest by dealer/writers, and about the firing of columnists from Linn's. At least five different sources have provided me with information about why Dr. Robert Rabinowitz and Stephen Esrati no longer write for Linn's, and you can be assured that there are several different stories. Rather than delve into specifics, since this is a column of commentary (I am not an investigative reporter), I will conclude my writing on this topic with some general thoughts.

I had occasion to speak with Michael Laurence, the editor of Linn's. He points out that the history of philatelic journalism has rested heavily on the shoulders of "professionals," i.e. dealers, going back to J. Walter Scott, and including names like Herman Herst, Robson Lowe, and many others. They have consistently been the source of the best material, and it would be very difficult to publish a weekly without relying on dealers as contributors. Linn's counts on such people not to abuse their podium such as mis-stating facts so as to enhance one's position as a dealer. The charge against Rabinowitz was that he deliberately led his readers to believe that certain coils were scarcer than they actually were, while he was sitting on a large find of the material in question. I have letters from people backing this story, and others offering a different version. Suffice it to say, the position on editorial responsibility espoused by Laurence seems eminently fair and righteous; a columnist who uses his podium for self-aggrandizement is guilty of the same breach of faith as are crooked public officials.

One final note: When I wrote a column in one of the weeklies myself a few years back, I received no stipend, but I requested, and was offered, an occasional free classified ad instead. I am advised that Linn's offers no quid pro quo for columnists; they are paid at published rates for their work, and they pay the standard rates when they advertise.

The "new" player in the weekly game is **Mekel's**, which is actually the oldest of the weeklies recently reincarnated. I had heard of **Mekel's** on and off over the past ten years, but I saw no reason to subscribe until about five months ago when two things happened: I agreed to watch the weeklies, and new ownership was announced. I could not avoid investing \$9 (for one year) to see what would be forthcoming.

I have before me a random selection of 14 issues from March through July. **Mekel's** is certainly different from the other three weeklies. For one thing, it is only eight pages, one of which is devoted solely to classified ads; hence, it can be read in about 15 minutes or less, and it won't tire your arms in bed. The front page also contains three or four display ads, which along with the banner (not the masthead--you won't catch me), takes up about 55 percent of the front page. That leaves room to start two stories on each front page, and in an informal survey they break down roughly as follows: 80 percent news of U.S. forthcoming issues, 10 percent "happenings" in philately (the Scott catalog controversy, the Weill brothers sale, etc.), and 10 percent unique material not seen elsewhere. On the inside, the percentage of unique material rises somewhat, and this, if anything, is the potential strength of **Mekel's**.

If you subscribe to more than one weekly, as I do, and if you get **The American Philatelist** as well, then you are probably up to your eyeballs in redundancy. There is only a finite amount of philatelic news; all three papers get the same Postal Service bulletins about new issues here and abroad, and the same public relations flack about the strong prices realized at the last Soakem and Regummem Rarities of the Galaxy auction. None of us need five copies of the list of U.S./U.N./Canada issues for the year. Each paper maintains a stable of columnists and contributors whose musings, interspersed amongst all the other stuff, set that publication apart.

Mekel's has several such. First there is the editor, John Dunn, who gives himself most of the inside front page for a

rambling, loosely structured discourse on all manner of things, including letters to the editor, publishing woes, the weather in White Plains, stamp subjects, and just about everything else. June was devoted to the Scott catalog controversy (Dunn in general defended the changes, with reservations). My initial impression is that once he gets better organized, his column will probably be of considerable interest. Then there is a strange character named Justin Bacharach who writes a column titled "Sees All." I assume that this is a legacy of **Mekel's** from the past: I happened to have met Bacharach about 10 years ago, at which time I was led to believe that he was one of the senior philatelists around, but he is still at it. Although his style is rather disjointed, his subject matter, like Pat Herst's, often deals with the ancient history of stamp collecting (from the 20s through the 50s), and if you read Bacharach weekly, you will not often find yourself saying, "Oh, that story again!"

Mekel's is then rounded out by a timely set of reprints of columns from the past, and a fairly interesting selection of additional feature articles. There is also a modest number of ads. I have not yet started to calculate how much space in each of the four weeklies is devoted to ads vs. columns vs. PR flack, etc., which I will do for a forthcoming column, but ads appear to take up less space in **Mekel's** than in the others, and many of those that have appeared are of the tombstone variety; if you read **Linn's** only for the long lists of stamps with prices, **Mekel's** will not interest you. But in total, it would appear that Dunn has gone to great lengths to solicit unusual, non-mainstream material for his paper. I have no idea how long he can keep it up before he burns out himself and/or cashes in all his chips, but as long as he does, I think my nine bucks has been reasonably well spent.

Letter from the Editor

Tom Maeder, the author of this quarter's lead story, got the assignment because he isn't affiliated with **Mekel's**.

~~Collector, Stamps, or Mekeel's~~. He is a fine philatelic writer, generous in spirit but thoughtfully critical. He researches carefully, and always gives the benefit of the doubt, as members of the Plate Number Coil Collectors Club know. Tom edits PNC3's monthly, ~~Communicator~~.

Writers Unit 30 is awash in computer sophistication. Four members volunteered to write for us on the subject, in response to my appeal last issue. Ken Trettin got the nod by virtue of having been the first to volunteer. Ken edits ~~The American Revenue Review~~, journal of the American Revenue Association. I'm grateful to the others who also volunteered, and I'm sure we'll learn from all of them in future issues.

Karen L. Weigt sent information about the Madison, Wisconsin, PC User's Group monthly newsletter, ~~Bite of PC~~, of which she is associate editor. She included a delightful article from the June issue (reprinted from the Tokyo PC Newsletter) titled, "Why Word Processing Can Make You a Poorer Writer." To get a copy, send me a stamp.

I belong to more than twenty philatelic societies, but they are evidently a different group from the ones that include Barbara Mueller as a member. As a result, I am not receiving some significant philatelic literature. Please add ~~The Philatelic Communicator~~ editor to your publication's mailing list.

For book reviews I'm using both volunteers and conscripts (Bob Wendt and George Griffenhagen, respectively, in this issue). At present all books received are in the hands of those who agreed to review them. If you would like to be on the waiting list of reviewers, drop me a post or postal card.

Copy deadline for the Fourth Quarter 1989 issue is October 20 for columnists, reviewers, and letter writers.

For the First Quarter 1990 issue, copy must be in my hands by March 15, 1990.

The quarters of philatelic activity annually do not coincide with equal divisions of the calendar, so if you have something important to share with your fellow members, send it in before October 20 or be

prepared for a lengthy wait before you'll see it in print.

Once more on literature exhibiting: I have no desire to enter ~~The Philatelic Communicator~~ in competition for any prize, but I would like opportunities to exhibit it so that other collectors could become familiar with it. Has any show adopted Bob de Violini's proposal (Second Quarter 1988 PC) for a non-competitive literature display?

Letters to the Editor

From John F. Dunn

Please pass along to our fellow members of the Writers Unit my regrets at being unable to attend the Writers Breakfast. The work involved in rebuilding ~~Mekeel's~~ is going to keep me close to home for some time to come.

I appreciate your good wishes and the fact that the rejuvenation of ~~Mekeel's~~ is being recognized by members of the Writers Unit. The goodwill that has been accorded us by many members of the writing community, as well as by the other weeklies has not gone unnoticed, by me and by many people to whom I have spoken.

If I can take a moment of time at the meeting, I would like to especially recognize ~~Linn's Stamp News~~ for the cordial reception they have given my efforts. The editors and staff of ~~Linn's~~ have carried the mantle of leadership with courage and integrity, and deserve our applause for their efforts.

At ~~Mekeel's~~, we are taking another road, in considerable part because ~~Mekeel's~~ is doing such a fine job. Our position as a supplementary, rather than an alternative, publication is becoming recognized by readers who have expressed the feeling that we share--they need ~~Mekeel's~~ and they enjoy reading ~~Mekeel's~~.

One of our writers expressed our mission better than I could. While I like to think of ~~Mekeel's~~ as pleasant reading, Bear Rowell, an enormous writing talent, describes it as the publication for the liter-

ate adult collector. Whatever the description, our mission is clear--to offer readers something that will remain with them, and which they will not find in the other weeklies.

The rejuvenation of **Mekel's** comes at a time when philatelic writing is itself enjoying a renaissance. It is, therefore, especially pleasing to me to be able to open the pages of **Mekel's** to my fellow writers. We have blank pages to be filled; I invite--indeed challenge-- you to fill them with significant works in keeping with our mission.

From Martin Margulis:

"Russian style" elections do nothing for me. If you can't get more than one candidate for an office, just appoint them. Who is being fooled when there is just one candidate for each office? I'm glad APS finally saw the light. I find it hard to believe the Writers Unit couldn't get more than one person interested. More likely the "old boys" just liked running the organization.

From Dr. Robert Rabinowitz:

I read with interest Robert Greenwald's column in the Second Quarter 1989 issue of **PC**. Since the bulk of the column dealt with me, some response appears appropriate.

Greenwald clearly "missed the boat" and may lack perceptiveness. I am a strong supporter of having dealers with knowledge contribute columns to the leading publications. My column in **The Stamper** regarding Bob Dumaine and the Duck Stamps column he's writing now was merely to highlight an apparent inconsistency in Michael Laurence's approach to selecting columnists.

When I was terminated as **Linn's** Plate Numbers columnist early in 1987, I was given the opportunity to get out of the plate number business and continue the column. Was this an idle gesture? Was the "potential conflict of interest" a smoke screen? You bet it was.

A major competitor in the plate number coil area who is a personal friend of Lau-

rence and a big advertiser in **Stamp** complained strongly that my column gave me substantial visibility and therefore a competitive advantage. If the shoe were on the other foot, I'd have been complaining.

I appreciate Greenwald's lumping my **Stamper** column in the sound category. I would, however, like to make it perfectly clear that the column appears with no self-serving motivation relative to my PNC business. I have never advertised in **Stamp** and have not, as yet, even accepted any payment for the columns. If you choose, look at them as a good-will gesture to a very youthful publication.

Finally, Greenwald erroneously described me as a major plate block dealer. That's totally wrong. I wholesaled to several major dealers, retailed to a few plate block by position specialists, and had a few other customers gained through sporadic advertising. My principal philatelic activity for at least a decade before I began focusing on plate number coils was writing. Thus I wrote a column for **Stamp** on a biweekly basis and published newsletters dealing with investment aspects of 20th Century U.S. material.

From Steven J. Rod:

Bob Greenwald's "Watching the Weeklies" really struck home with me, especially with regard to his comments on dealers who are philatelic writers, and the potential for such a dealer/writer converting his "column into a forum for creating personal profit."

I resigned, regrettfully, after three years as the bi-weekly U.S. stamps columnist for **Stamps** on March 31, 1989, over this issue. While the impetus for the resignation was my need to cut back on my philatelic writing, the choice of **Stamps**, rather than any other publication, was easy. In the past twelve months, I had watched almost every major **Stamps** column being taken over by a dealer. In the weeks preceding April 1, Charles Shreve, president of Steve Ivy Auctions, became the auction columnist with columns stating "You betcha, the auction market is better than ever," and Lee Rosenbloom, president of Regal Stamps, saying in his premiere column that dealers

should be subject to full disclosure with their customers! A prominent first day cover/program dealer is the first day cover columnist; the leading errors dealer in America is the errors columnist. An auction dealer specializing in postal history is the postal history columnist. There is more.

When **Stamps** reorganized in February 1986, and the new owners and editors set their goals to revive the magazine into its long forsaken days of glory, I was excited. The **Stamps** magazines of the 40s and 50s are fabulous. It soon became apparent that management was not interested in investing money to make money, and all sorts of corners were being cut. The conversion to newspaper format was a major blow to a proud magazine. By 1989, **Stamps** had lost it in the creativity department. Taking any typical issue, one is overwhelmed by the dealers. Now let me say, since almost all of these dealers are friends of mine, or were until they read this, that I do not believe they all intentionally set about to use the columns as "forums for creating personal profit." A careful reading each week shows a very clear continuum: from the dealers who in no way mention their firms or their status as dealers, all the way to those who clearly discuss their dealer's doings in their columns, and invite business as a result.

I don't have any great insights into this issue, only my gut. The average reader of the weeklies, let's say 110,000 of the 125,000, cannot distinguish among the columnists, they just read the paper. Therefore, I am troubled by the continued subliminal advertising many of these dealers do within their columns. That is why when Bob Dumaine started doing Ducks in **Stamps**, I figured maybe those of us who are "only collectors" and writing for the weeklies seemed to be an endangered species--dying ducks. Greenwald's question is a most legitimate one. I suspect, however, that none of the weeklies currently have a policy statement on the issue.

Finally, to cover my behind, frequently, as recently as July 17, 1989, I wrote in **Stamps** that this hobby cannot possibly

survive without its professional dealers. I truly believe that, and want to reiterate that here. On the other hand, I am very uncomfortable with their increasing market share of the weekly column space. In my profession of social work, we are constantly looking at "use of self." I believe, with all due respect to these dealers' high level of expertise, that it's inappropriate use of self to serve as columnists: regrettably, it has too many downsides in the credibility department.

From L. N. Williams:

Two things: one a hint or tip; the other a peeve.

The Hint or Tip:

"Cover Photography" by Joseph von Hake, **The Philatelic Communicator**, Second Quarter, 1989 pullout section: "What you will need: Shutter release cable."

Contrary to the statement by the author of the excellent advice, although this is an inexpensive it is by no means an indispensable item with most through-the-lens reflex cameras nowadays. The "self-timer"--which enables one to feature in, e.g., a group photograph taken by one-self--ensures vibration-free exposure. Of course, if no self-timer is part of the camera mechanism, a shutter release cable is useful.

The peeve:

I am dead set against the inveterate "ee"-ers, who use the double "e" as a suffix at the drop of a hat without considering its significance. An "ee" person is a passive participant; the active equivalent is an "er" or "or" person. A person who actively becomes a member of a society is a joiner--not a joinee; a person who actively does something is a doer, not a doee; a person who signs something is a signer, not a signee; a person who gives is a donor, & so on, et cetera, und so weiter, ad nauseam.

A person who is evacuated is referred to, often, as an evacuee; a person honored may be referred to as an honoree; a per-

son to whom a donation is made can legitimately and legally be referred to as a donee.

Upon what grammarians and logicians do those persons feed that they are become so dulled as to refer to people actively attending a function as "attendees"? The persons actively present at a function are assuredly attenders, not attendants (which has a special meaning) but equally not, not attendees.

[Editor's note:I share with Norman Williams a prejudice against attendees. The word does not appear in the dictionaries I prefer. I do not use it myself, although a ~~Friend~~ editor recently imposed it on one of my articles. However, as editor I do not purge it from another writer's prose. American English is a bit more liberal with this construction than English English. ~~The American Heritage Dictionary~~ defines "ee" first as the recipient of an action, and second as "One who is in a condition specified by the main element; for example, standee."]

From Kendall C. Sanford:

I was interested in the item from Diana Manchester in the Second Quarter 1989 issue (whole no. 84) about displaying literature at philatelic literature exhibitions. She mentions that in five years of making literature available in an unsupervised setting, COLOPEX has not had one piece stolen. They have simply been lucky. Try that in New York...or nearly anywhere else...and see what happens.

As founder of the American Air Mail Society's Aerophilatelic Literature Exhibitions, I have had a few years experience with "displaying" the literature entries. The first year we held the literature exhibition, it was at NOJEX in New Jersey. We displayed all the literature entries on a table with someone watching over it. However, as I could find only one volunteer, we had a problem every time he had to go to the toilet or lunch. It was too much of a worry and we did not do it that way again.

Most exhibitions don't have the space to provide a separate reading room or area, and then there is the problem of getting volunteers to watch over the literature. After the first time we asked the show organizers to rent three or four coin display cases. These are the type that are

about three inches deep with locking glass tops. They sit on top of tables, which can usually be placed between or at the end of the exhibition frames. We then had small signs made to put on each display case, advising anyone interested in the literature items to ask for me at the AAMS table. I would have an extra copy (which we had previously used for judging) at the AAMS table, and then the person could look at it at his or her leisure.

I also had information sheets available for all literature entries, which gave a summary of each item, the name and address of the publisher, and the price. This system has worked well. I do not care for the SESCAL method of hanging the literature on a peg board. It is not only difficult to attach books to a cord, it is also too easy for someone to cut the cord and walk off with the book.

From Everett Erie:

The purity of the English language as used in the United States is forever threatened by the continued misuse in public speeches or in the media. For example, someone introduced the harsh-to-the-ears word "importantly" into the vocabulary. Even television advertisers are spreading this misuse.

In philately we too have a problem. Post card and postal card were not intended to be interchangeable, despite their frequent misuse. Ask the deltiologist what he collects, and the answer is an unhesitating "post cards." The country-wide post card shows would never be "postal card shows."

Webster's dictionary does not say the expressions are interchangeable. For the primary definition "a card with a printed postage stamp, for use in the mails" a number 1 is used for this definition of a "postal card," with a numeral 2, indicating lesser importance, for "post card."

At one time the distinction was a monetary one. A postal card could be sent through the mails at a rate lower than that for post cards.

Another phrase that has long been accepted, but which is not accurate, is "stampless covers," referring to the folded

letters used in the early years of postal history. The intent is that these letters do not have "adhesive stamps" which Rowland Hill introduced in 1840. But these "stampless covers" do have stamps--the marking of the office of origin, the recording of postage, and similar ~~are~~ stamps. The only phrase that survives in this category is the cds used for "circular date stamp."

[Editor's note: Unfortunately the Postal Service has clouded what once was a fairly clear distinction. When the post card rate increased from 13 cents to 14 cents, it issued an undenominated Official stamp inscribed "Postal Card Rate D" for the transition period, until 14-cent officials could be issued. Postal cards would not have required these stamps.]

From Karen L. Weight:

Ragged right vs. right justified:

My hand is constantly being slapped for hitting the "justify" key. Most professors maintain it's too formal for a newsletter/brochure format and makes it **more** difficult for the eye to follow.

Justifying should be reserved for a very short line length or, as stated by Diana, when illustrations are worked in with the text (which often creates a short line length).

Single column or double column:

This depends entirely upon what size type is being used. For ease of reading, the smaller the type, the shorter the line length.

Mastheads and banners:

Let me add "nameplate" to the confusion: another term for "the fancy title of the publication that appears at the top of the front page."

WordPerfect 5.0:

Let's hope Joe Frye has nothing to do for the next six months but conquer this software to the point of producing a newsletter.

Although extremely versatile, the tutorial alone for Version 5.0 consists of 398 pages! Also, justification will not necessarily satisfy Steven Weston if Joe hasn't learned the word spacing function to avoid rivers of type flowing all over the page. I

won't overly criticize **WordPerfect** until I've had more experience with it, but a simpler solution is a basic, compatible word processor with a desktop publishing program.

[From Joe Frye--The manual plus the workbook plus two other excellent help books, **FastAccess WordPerfect 5.0** and **Mastering WordPerfect**, by Rhyder McClure and Susan Baake Kelley, respectively, make the page total about a thousand plus. I think double columns are better than one. I 'justify' because this journal is supposed to be a leader of peers' efforts. I will follow the editor's wishes and guidance. I have indeed used many hours with "WP". More details next issue.]

From Kendall C. Sanford:

In **The Philatelic Communicator**, First Quarter 1989 issue, John Hotchner wrote an excellent report on the SESCAL '88 Literature Competition, and in it he listed the Evaluation Criteria provided by the SESCAL Committee, as well as a number of the critique areas for evaluating philatelic literature. One important item missed by both SESCAL and John is the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) or the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN). There are a number of benefits from the use of the ISBN and ISSN, which were outlined in a two part article I wrote for the **Philatelic Literature Review** in the issues of Second Quarter 1982 and Second Quarter 1985.

I believe that my article is a must reference for all philatelic authors and editors. I will be happy to provide a copy of the article to anyone interested for \$3.00 (cash, check, or mint U.S. stamps) to cover the costs of photocopying and mailing. My address is 4 Avenue General Guiguer, CH-1197 Prangins (Vaud), Switzerland.

[Editor's note: See also "ISBN/ISSN--What Are They?" by Alan Warren in the Fourth Quarter 1988 **PC** pages 48-49.]

From Larry McInnis:

"Adjectively Adverbified" in the Second Quarter 1989 edition of **PC** was delightful, particularly the subtle difference between "which" and "that."

I edit the editorials in **The Gazette**, the third-largest daily newspaper in Canada, founded in Montreal June 3, 1778, by Fleury Mesplet, who had been sent here by Benjamin Franklin to promote the revolutionary cause.

There are four full-time and one part-time editorial writers at **The Gazette**. Three of the five have won at least one national newspaper award. All use "which" when it should be "that." I have been making the change for ten years, yet not one has noticed that a change has been made, nor has any one learned of their misuse.

I have great sympathy for competent writers who have their infinitives split and their participles dangled.

"Se-tenantly" is shocking, but so is "okayed." I was about to criticize your use of "funniest" until I saw that Webster's lists it as a superlative. Funnily enough, I was surprised.

How about "someone" as preferential to "somebody?" I've given up on Webster: "Somebody" as a noun - "He must be somebody to receive a welcome like that."

I must confess that I don't read my columns in **Linn's** to the point of comparing the printed to the written version. I wrote a column for Canada Post for five years that was distributed to weekly newspapers in Canada. It was a pleasure for the first three years. My Canada Post editor was a former newsman who had a respect for style, but who could recognize an inconsistency or a possible error. He'd call and we'd discuss it.

This tremendous person went on to higher endeavors, forced by Canada Post's firm belief in the Peter Principle.

My friendly editor's replacement was someone (or somebody) out of journalism school. My columns were edited to the extreme, to where my "style" was reduced through insertion of errors and inaccuracies as to be embarrassing, to be polite about the matter. Canada Post and I parted company after two years of complaints from me. My contract was not renewed in 1988 because 1988-89 was the fiscal year in which Canada Post Corp. was to show a profit, or else!

Canada Post Corp. declared a profit of \$96 million in that period, the first in a

half-century. I'm happy that I made a contribution.

It gives me some perverse satisfaction that my "editor" seems to have disappeared, too.

You credit Winston (Leonard) Spencer Churchill with saying "That's the kind of nonsense up with which I will not put."

Churchill was not only one of the world's greatest visionaries and politicians, he was one of the world's greatest authors and historians. He was, without challenge, the most expert user of the English language since Bill Shakespeare.

I have it that he said, "This is the sort of English up with which I will not put."

I've always quoted him as saying "That is something up with which I will not put."

In any case (ha! ha! I started with a preposition, as did you), it is encouraging that we are striving to protect the language.

Sooner, rather than later, someone will write to complain that this has nothing to do with philately. It does. Let's have English as it should be writ rather than as she is spoke.

From Ken Lawrence:

Here's feedback to feedback to feedback, in response to one of Bob Spaulding's points in the last issue, I would not write or say "an historian." Euphonic or not, it sounds snobbish.

However, for clarity's sake, I might say "an historic" or "an historical," even though to some it would sound affected. My reason would be to avoid the ambiguity caused by the homonymy of the definite article and the negating prefix "a-": "a historical" is the opposite of "ahistorical."

On another subject, I disagree with Diana Manchester's single-column format preference. I treasure her journal, but this one is easier to read.

As it happens, I also prefer ragged-right copy, but after Joe Frye has invested so much in the latest technology, how dare a mere editor overrule the near-universal preference for justification?

COMPUTERIZED JOURNALISM

Desktop Publishing-- what is it?

BY KENNETH TRETTIN

Pick up most any personal computer magazine today and the hot word seems to be desktop; desktop publishing, desktop presentations or desktop media. If you use a personal computer of almost any type or have had some exposure to personal computer magazines in the past four years, you probably know what we're talking about.

Desktop publishing came into being early in 1985 along with the introduction of Apple Computer's new LaserWriter printer. The LaserWriter was not the first laser printer. Hewlett Packard's Laser Jet printer had been out for several months, but the LaserWriter was the first of a new breed--it had a much more powerful brain, in fact three times more computer memory than the Macintosh computers that were used with them. Using a computer language called Post Script, the LaserWriter had the ability to print text at a resolution of 300 dots per inch, print different type faces, in different sizes, along with various types of graphic elements such as rules, tints, and artwork.

The Post Script-driven laser printer along with page layout programs for the computer are what made desktop publishing possible. The inside of a laser printer is in reality nothing more than a modified copy machine. A small power laser beam scans the surface of the photo-sensitive drum rather than light reflected off an original and focused through a lens. While Post Script is no longer the only high-level system for driving laser printers, it remains the most flexible, the most widely used, and in many ways the most useful for the desktop publisher.

While originally the Macintosh was the computer of choice for desktop publishing, most any computer system can be used today. However, the Macintosh and the IBM PC (and its clones) remain the most popu-

lar; they have the most software (the programs that do the work) and hardware (the machines that run the software) available. The software often demands large amounts of computer memory and fast, high-powered microprocessors (this is best described as "computer central;" it is the heart of the computer's brain that does the actual computing). These demands often can mean updating your existing computer occasionally even at an expense equal to or greater than buying a whole new system of some other type. And let's not kid ourselves, the software and hardware are expensive.

Word processing programs can be used too as the final step between your computer and the printer; a page layout or desktop publishing program is desirable. Aldus PageMaker and Ready, Set, Go! were two of the first for the Macintosh, with later appearances by Express and a new appearance by Springboard Publisher at the low cost (and reduced performance) end. For the IBM there is Ventura Publisher, Publish It!, First Publisher, and Aldus Page-Maker.

[As a personal observation and from experience, PageMaker is the best program for desktop publishing. This program has the advantage of working on both Macintosh and IBM systems and can exchange files between the two. It also works in a manner that most closely resembles the manner in which one pastes up copy in traditional publishing.]

The page layout program has the ability to take word processor files, graphics files (such as from paint or draw programs and scanned images) and assemble them into finished pages. They allow you to edit the text, add new text, create new graphic elements and modify the text by changing column widths, text face, size, line, and paragraph spacing. All of this occurs within seconds and appears on your monitor screen.

As I have said before, all of this can be rather expensive, running several thousand dollars. However, there are a number of additional considerations and ways to save costs. Do not buy your own laser printer; use one at work, use a friend's, use one at a copy shop for about 50 cents

per page. Use your computer primarily for other purposes or at least enough other things so that the cost attributable to each use is smaller. Do not buy the most advanced system, just one that will do what you expect it to do. Start small with the bare minimums and then buy additional software and/or hardware as you see needs develop.

I have indicated to Ken Lawrence that I am willing to write about computers and their uses in philatelic journalism for **The Philatelic Communicator**. This column may or may not appear every issue. For those of you who may not know me, I am the editor of **The American Revenuer**. In the past thirteen years that I have been editor, the publication has gone from letterpress to cheap offset to quality offset. Since the summer of 1985, composition for this journal has been done with an Apple Macintosh and a LaserWriter. That makes **The American Revenuer** one of the first philatelic if not any-subject desktop published magazines.

I am willing to share my experiences and my opinions with you. This first column has been rather general since I have no idea where to start, advanced or basic. If you use a computer for your philatelic writing/editing please write to me. Tell me what computer and what software you use and what you use it for. If you are interested in getting a computer, tell me what you would like to do with it. To be of value, a column of this nature must have reader input. If you would like to see a copy of a recent issue of my magazine, let me know (postage for four ounces would be appreciated but not necessary, as would an address label).

My address is: Kenneth Trettin, Rockford, Iowa 50468-0056 USA. Should you want to telephone you can call (515) 756-3542; this is a phone at home but no one will answer it if I am not at home (no answer does not mean that no one is home).

No question is too dumb; no comment is unwanted. The only thing not wanted is your lack of response.

The Prussian Passive

BY KEN LAWRENCE

All authorities agree: avoid the passive voice if you want your writing to be lively and interesting. Nothing deadens reader attention more quickly and thoroughly than repeated resort to passive construction, which is probably one reason why it is the preferred writing style at all levels of government bureaucracy, especially the military.

The passive voice may be used, as in the first clause of this sentence, when riveting the reader's attention to the subject is more important than moving things along with an active, transitive verb. Even then, it should be chosen carefully, deliberately, and with restraint.

I have noticed that some philatelic writers employ a construction that is even worse, and that editors let them get away with it. For lack of an adequate label, and perhaps unfairly, I shall call it the **Prussian Passive**, because it reminds me of how certain German texts sound when translated into English by helpful friends in Berlin.

Another properly descriptive term for this solecism might be **pluspassive**, by analogy to calling the past perfect tense pluperfect (borrowing **plus que parfait** from French grammar books, literally "more than perfect").

Consider these examples: The active voice says, "I had the impression . . ." or "He gave the impression . . ." Rendered passively, it comes out, "The impression was given . . ." But the Prussian passive version is, "There was an impression . . ."

Technically, the third example is not a passive sentence at all, but in practice it is even worse. Here's why:

In the active example, the reader knows everything he or she wants to know--who gave or had an impression, to be followed immediately by a subordinate clause describing that impression.

In the passive example, the writer may or may not supply that essential fact. If not, the sentence will float lackadaisically, without anyone being responsible. If so, the actual doer will be the object of a

preposition, "by me" or "by her," rather than the subject, a weak, stilted introduction.

It is easy to see how passive construction evolved into the preferred syntax of the military. "Col. Custer ordered the attack," invites accountability. "The attack was ordered," while clouding the matter of responsibility, at least implies an actual person issued a command. Someone, perhaps the colonel, perhaps a subordinate, has supplied the required paperwork but minimized the amount of actual information reported. If the attack succeeds, Custer's ghostwriter can always puff it up in his memoir. If it fails, his role may pass unnoticed by all but the most careful scholars.

The Prussian passive is even more remote, because nobody did anything in the sentence, "There was an order to attack." The grammar textbook has been obeyed literally, but the writer found a way to evade responsibility entirely while composing a simple declarative sentence. Of course, one could quibble that the style-book instructs careful writers to avoid "there is" and "there are," but every writer knows that is an injunction that cannot be enforced, and besides, what was good enough for Shakespeare is good enough for me.

Although the plupassive doesn't really exist as a structure of the English language, it is a plague upon our literature. Writers joke that the worst imaginable opening line for a novel is, "It was a dark and rainy night." Novelists, however, have space to recover. If the second sentence says, "A bolt of lightning lit up the sky and thunder roared as the priest's tongue danced across the child's quivering lips,"* few readers will doze off.

Philatelic writers rarely have the luxury to make amends for our grammatical gaffes with titillating trailers. What we write, often less than what we write, is what our readers get. We have no space for airy sentences that tease readers by withholding information.

There must not be a Prussian passive.

*Apologies to Father Andrew Greeley and Harold Robbins for having borrowed their subject matter and style, respectively, for purposes of illustration only.

1989 Lidman Prize Competition

The third annual national competition for writers of philatelic articles published in the non-philatelic press is now open for entries. The contest, known as the Lidman Prize competition, is sponsored by the Council of Philatelic Organizations (Copo). There are five categories in the contest, including regular stamp columns in major and smaller newspapers, articles in major and smaller magazines, and an "all other publications" category, to cover publications other than newspapers or magazines. The columns and articles on stamps or with a philatelic theme must have been published in the United States between October 1, 1988, and September 30, 1989.

Nominations of columns or articles may be made by the author, by the publication where the work appeared, or by any other interested reader. The authors must reside in the United States or Canada, and each author may submit no more than two entries. There is no entry fee, but the nominator/entrant must provide three copies of the material for judging. All entry material becomes the property of COPO. No COPO board member or member of the judging panel may be nominated.

The judging criteria include originality of content; creativity in involving the reader in the philatelic hobby through suggested activities and sources of more information; lucidity in presenting the full range of philately as a desirable pastime; skill at reporting local and regional stamp events; and accuracy of the information provided.

Each of the five categories will be judged for three medal levels (bronze, silver, and gold) with a grand award, the Lidman Prize, for the best of all entries. The Prize itself, an engraved plaque, includes an honorarium paying for transportation to the site of the presentation of the award. The 1989 Lidman Prize will be presented during World Stamp Expo '89 in Washington, D.C.

No winner of the Lidman Prize may compete in the same category in which he or

she won for three years after winning. Previous winners of the Lidman Prize are Jeff Stage, stamp columnist for the Syracuse Herald American, Syracuse, New York; and Barth Healey, Stamp columnist for The New York Times.

The Lidman Prize honors the memory of David Lidman, stamp columnist for The New York Times from 1960 to 1973, and a prolific writer within philately. He died in 1982.

Entries must be submitted with the official entry form by October 1, 1989. Rules and an entry form are available from COPO, P.O. Box COPO, State College, PA 16803. COPO is a non-profit organization comprising more than 400 stamp clubs, stamp firms, and other philatelic entities interested in promoting the stamp hobby to the general public.

Kansas City Club Will Give Philatelic Pulitzer

David Dailey, president of the Collectors Club of Kansas City, has announced the appointment of Randy L. Neil as chairman of the CCKC "John K. Tiffany Medal For Philatelic Journalism" awards which are to be initiated by the club in late 1989.

Geared to emulate the format of the Pulitzer Prizes in the national journalism media, the Tiffany Medal is named in honor of one of the founders of the American Philatelic Society in 1886. John K. Tiffany of St. Louis, Missouri, was a prolific writer and preeminent collector of philatelic literature. His collection of the latter was sold to the Earl of Crawford after Tiffany's death and, when later donated to the Royal Philatelic Society, London, formed the nucleus of the world's foremost philatelic library.

The establishment of this special honors program completely replaces the CCKC's former national philatelic journalism competition which, until 1988, was held annually in connection with the MIDAPHIL "World Series of Philately" exhibition.

"The Tiffany Medal awards will not be a competition where entries will be solicited

from writers," explained Dailey. "Two separate committees will be formed from among well-known philatelists. One will nominate various writers for their work in five journalism categories. The other committee, comprising experienced literature judges, will select one annual Tiffany Medal recipient from each of the categories. Persons managing, selecting and/or judging the awards will not be eligible in the selection process.

"Writers and editors are invited to make their works known to the CCKC Tiffany Medal committee and may receive further information by writing directly to us.

"The chief purpose of the Tiffany Medal is to honor the highest form of excellence in philatelic journalism . . . a field not normally part of the various national literature competitions."

The CCKC intends to originate the selection process before the end of 1989 and will announce the recipients during 1990. The venue for the actual presentations has not been decided. The club is also in the process of having an appropriate medal designed and struck.

The names of the members of both the nominations and selection committees will not be made public. This and other aspects of the Tiffany Medal program are similar in nature to the annual medal awarded by the Collectors Club of Chicago for excellence in writing philatelic books.

The work of philatelic writers from the United States and Canada only are eligible in the following categories:

1. Regular column in the philatelic press.
2. Regular philatelic column in the public press.
3. Single article of a popular subject in the philatelic press.
4. Single article of a scholarly nature in the philatelic press.
5. The editing of a philatelic periodical.

A special data sheet is available which provides information on how writers can make their works known to the selection committee. To receive it, please send a #10 stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The Collectors Club of Kansas City, P.O. Box 7088, Shawnee Mission, Kansas, 66207.

Editor's Seminar at CHICAGOPEX

There will be a seminar for philatelic editors at CHICAGOPEX, at a time yet to be determined. CHICAGOPEX will be held the weekend of November 3-5 at Rosemont, Ill. The moderating panel will discuss helpful tools for the philatelic editor. The organizers desire a true discussion; therefore this will not be a formally structured lecture. The philatelic editor should be able to learn and take home something useful, whether he or she edits a monthly single-page newsletter for a local club or the biggest, fattest, and slickest journal in all of philately. The organizers intend that you will be able to take an idea or two and do whatever you do better and easier.

Should you have any questions or desire more information as the show approaches, contact either Cheryl Ganz (Chicago Philatelic Society, Box A3953, Chicago, IL 60690) or Kenneth Trettin (Rockford, Iowa 50468-0056).

Postcard Books Recognized

BY MARY ELLEN SEWARD

At IPAFEST 89, first annual exhibition and bourse of the International Postcard Association (IPA) in Miami, Fla., on January 7-8, 1989, two books were judged best on the subject of postcards published in America during the years 1980-1988.

American Advertising Postcards: Sets and Series 1890-1920, a catalog and price guide, by Frederic and Mary Megson. 329 pages. Lavishly illustrated. Includes details on sets, series, publishers, and a glossary.

American Paper Money: The American Photographic Postcard 1902-1971, by Hal Morgan and Andreas Brown, published by David R. Godine, Boston, Mass., 1981. 190 pages. Collection of realphoto postcards with scenes from all over the U.S. Appendix gives methods of dating photo postcards.

Both books available from: Gotham Book Mart & Gallery, Inc., 41 West 47th St., New York, NY 10036. Megson book \$15, Morgan, Brown (paperback) \$15.95, (hardcover) \$16.95.

[Mrs. Seward is secretary of the IPA.]

Guidelines for the Exhibiting of Philatelic Literature

[From **FLASH**, F.I.P. journal, whole No. 27, March 1989, page 28.]

Introduction

These guidelines are intended as a checklist which is detailed enough to be of service for specialized literature exhibitions as well as for general philatelic exhibitions in which literature is only one of several classes.

General Principles

While the majority of the principles in exhibiting philatelic literature is identical to those which apply to other philatelic classes as well, there are certain distinct differences.

In the first place, the significance and importance of a piece of literature cannot be seen from the outside. Literature must be judged by its content, and obviously the judges have to be familiar with that content before the start of the exhibition. While the three to five days available for judging will allow time for review and some reading, it in no way suffices for each judge to read each entry thoroughly.

Second, literature exhibits cannot be taken apart and improved from one show to the next. In many cases, the exhibit represents a lifetime of research and effort which will serve philately for years to come. For this reason, the exhibiting of philatelic literature must be looked at primarily as a means of encouraging and promoting such literary efforts, and only

secondarily as a competition for various levels of awards.

Third, it follows that the public must be able to examine the literature. A glance at a row of books in a locked case gives little information, and is a disservice to the viewer and the exhibitor. It is the content that is of interest, not the covers.

The FIP has developed a comprehensive set of regulations for evaluating philatelic exhibits, incorporating those FIP principles common to all competitive classes. For philatelic literature, these principles are expressed in the Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Philatelic Literature Exhibits at FIP Exhibitions. They are supplemented by provisions which recognize aspects of philatelic literature which are unique to this class, the Supplementary Rule for the Philatelic Literature class in FIP Exhibitions. The two documents, taken as a whole, constitute the requirements for exhibiting and judging literature at FIP exhibitions.

Use of the Evaluation System

STOCKHOLMIA '86 introduced the "point system" of the FIP General Regulations for the Evaluation of Competitive Exhibits (GREV) and the various Special Regulations (SREV), on a voluntary basis. The experience at STOCK-HOLMIA has shown that the use of such a system, together with appropriate "scoring sheets," can be helpful in reaching balanced and rational evaluations. However, it must be emphasized that such a system cannot be applied mechanically; the final point totals also must be looked at in terms of the overall quality of the exhibits.

It may be helpful at this point to give some concrete examples of the use of the scoring system. These examples are not taken from actual jury results; they are, however, representative of the evaluations reached during jury deliberations.

(1) **The Postal History of the Forwarding Agents**, by Ken Rowe, published 1984 by L. Hartmann:

- Treatment of contents (maximum 40) 38

Very clear presentation of a difficult, world-wide subject; the book is easy to use, and reliable.

- Originality, significance and depth of research (maximum 40) 37

Particularly high marks for originality; Rowe was the first to systematically treat this aspect of post history (in 1966 and again in 1974), inspiring other scholars to do similar research. The subject matter is also of considerable significance. Quite thorough, considering the world-wide scope, but Dromberg's recent work on Finnish forwarders lists many important agents not covered by Rowe.

- Technical matters (maximum 15) 13

A few problems with cross-indexing, and with placing of notes.

- Presentation (maximum 5) 4

93
(= Gold)

(2) **Eesti Filatelist/The Estonian Philatelist**. No. 30 (1984). Annual publication of the Society of Estonia Philatelists in Sweden and the Estonian Philatelic Society in New York. Edited by Elmar Ojaste. 288 pages.

- Treatment of contents (maximum 40) 34

Generally well written and edited, with good use of illustrations and tables. Most articles are in several languages, or at least have multilingual summaries. Not all articles are at the same level of clarity and technical soundness.

- Originality, significance and depth of research (maximum 40) 32

This journal is a critical source for Estonian philately, and contains much original material. This issue has several articles reprinted from other sources; also, not all of the material is philatelic (some numismatics, some errinophil items).

A single journal issue of course does not have the depth of the recent *Handbook of Estonian Philately*, although it must be remembered that much of the material in the handbook was originally developed within the pages of the journal.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| - Technical matters (maximum 15) | 14 |
| - Presentation (maximum 5) | 4 |

Occasional weakness in offset reproduction, affecting the legibility of illustrated covers and documents.

— 92
(= Vermeil)

Please note that the comments above are meant to suggest the mental process used in reaching a "numerical" evaluation. Two aspects of that thought process are worth stressing.

First, judges should look first for the positive aspects of the exhibits, rather than merely looking to see "How many points can I take off?"

Second, all evaluations have to be made on a comparative basis--what else has been published on that subject, how well are similar matters handled in other publications, even such questions as how significant a given publication may be for one country or language group as compared with others. These comparative factors can all change from one year or one exhibition to another, and it's conceivable that such changes may affect the evaluation of an exhibit.

REVIEWS

Writer's Reference Shelf

BY KEN LAWRENCE

The Synonym Finder by J. I. Rodale. Warner Books, Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10103. 6" x 9" soft cover. 1,361+iii pages. 1987 (1978). ISBN 0-446-37029-0.

Bernstein's Reverse Dictionary by Theodore M. Bernstein. Second edition, revised and expanded by David Grambs. Times Books and Random House Inc., New York. 6-1/4" x 9-1/4" soft cover, 351+xi pages. 1988 (1975).

Freelance Writing for Magazines and Newspapers: Breaking In Without Selling Out by Marcia Yudkin. Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 10 East 53rd Street, New York, New York 10022. 5-1/4" x 8" soft cover. 145 pages.

That community college scholar who asked the bookstore clerk for a copy of *Roger the Sorcerer* is behind the times. *Roget's Thesaurus* is no longer the best source for the student in need of a synonym. Philatelic writers, too, should be aware that *The Synonym Finder* outclasses all its rivals.

The late Theodore M. Bernstein wrote the best English stylebook ever written, *The Elements of Style*, and was co-author of the best editing manual, *Modern American Headlines*. Now his unusually useful reference, *Style Guide for Copy Editors*, is back in print.

When the perfect word is on the tip of your tongue but you just can't quite bring it into focus, Bernstein's book is the place to look it up. Just what is that odd word for the stamp hobby? Webster's, American Heritage, and Oxford dictionaries are no help. Stamp collecting means the collecting of postage stamps. Check Bernstein--stamp collecting: PHILATELY.

Finally, for aspiring writers who want to learn the ropes, I recommend starting with Marcia Yudkin's book, *Freelance Writing for Magazines and Newspapers: Breaking In Without Selling Out*. To invoke the current cliche, it's more user-

friendly than the intimidating standard guidebooks for writers. You'll find them all listed in her bibliography whenever you're ready for the heavy duty treatment.

Six Catalogs

BY KEN LAWRENCE

Minkus Aden and Protectorate States Stamp Catalog. Minkus Publications, Inc., 2031 Carolina Place, Fort Mill, South Carolina 29715. 6" x 9" soft cover, saddle stitched. 48 unnumbered pages. 1988.

Bangladesh Stamps and Postal History by Siddique Mahmudur Rahman. Published by Selima Khatun, W8B Staff Quarter, Rajshahi University, Rajshahi, Bangladesh. 5-1/2 x 8-1/2" soft cover. 64+xii pages. 1988. \$6 U.S.

Handbook of Cuba Part II: The Republic by William McP. Jones and R. J. Roy Jr. Available from R. J. Roy Jr., P.O. Box 5367, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23455. 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" three-hole drilled. 322+ix pages with a 7-page locator foldout. 1989. \$25; ring binder \$5 additional.

Astronaut Autopens: Examples of the Flown N.A.S.A. Astronauts, Freedom 7 to STS-27 by Simon A. Vaughan and Roy M. Gutzke. Available from Simon A. Vaughan, 85 Thorncliffe Park Drive, Apartment 1801, Toronto, Ontario M4H 1L6, Canada. 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" soft cover saddle stitched, 56 pages. 1989. \$6 U.S.

Commemorative Cancellation Catalog. Available from General Image, Inc., P.O. Box 335, Maplewood, New Jersey 07040. 8-1/2" x 11" three-hole drilled pages unbound. Ten issues per year. Calendar year subscription \$10 in the U.S., \$20 elsewhere.

United States First-Class Mail Permit Stamp Catalog Including Business Reply Mail by Richard Stambaugh. Available from the author at 12 Rutgers Drive, Trenton, New Jersey 07724. 8-1/2 x 11" soft cover. 150 pages. 1989. \$29.50.

Philatelic writers have as great a need for catalogs of collectibles as anyone in the hobby does, but our specific requirements are often ignored completely in the public debate over their content. The past

year's barrage of shrill invective directed against Scott by a clique of disgruntled, hypocritical stamp merchants and auction hands has tended to obscure the fact that, for most users, the prices assigned to a handful of high-flying stamps beyond the reach of nearly all collectors is a trivial concern. (If they really are so important, where was Greg Manning's marching band during all those years of preposterously inflated catalog values?)

As a collector, my typical use of stamp catalogs is to establish equivalent values for trades, but as a writer I rely on each catalog to be a trove of information about stamp subtleties. Price is usually the least significant aspect of the listings. Remove the prices altogether, and stamp catalogs would remain as indispensable as ever for me.

With one exception, that is. The **Minkus 1988 Aden and Protectorate States Stamp Catalog** will be a permanent monument to our hobby's debasement by Marc Rousso, the flimflam man with the French accent. The only reason this catalog exists at all is for the prices, which should provide a case study in what can happen when a catalog publisher transfers editorial control to someone with a direct stake in the listed values. Rousso used this book to price his inventory of never hinged South Arabian wallpaper at \$200 million, multiples of what the impressive Boker and Weill collections were worth. If you can find a copy, grab it. It's sure to become a collector's item in its own right, and will provide material for a better-than-fiction philatelic fable in years to come.

On the other hand, **Bangladesh Stamps and Postal History** does exactly what a catalog should, even though it doesn't price anything. The first 30 pages is a narrative history of Bangladesh from ancient times as a province of India, to the British colonial period, to partition, to final independence, including a report on the posts and postage of each epoch. Next the stamp issues of independent Bangladesh are listed, with a concordance to Scott and Stanley Gibbons catalog listings of each, followed by official stamps, postal stationery, and commemorative cancellations.

The most useful aspect is the appendix, showing all the handstamp Bangladesh overprints on the stamps of Pakistan, in English and Bengali, issued between December 19, 1971, and April 28, 1973. Scott has this wrong: "Various stamps of Pakistan were handstamped locally for use in Bangladesh during the first half of 1971." This will give me material to write about. Articles immediately suggest themselves on the stamps (probably often misfiled and mounted with Pakistan) and covers bearing these overprint issues.

The third volume of James and Roy's *Cuba Handbook* covers 1902 to 1961, the period most widely collected in the United States, in excruciatingly specialized detail, including stamps, stationery, fakes and forgeries, post office seals, government issued souvenirs, and telegraph stamps, describing errors, varieties, and quantities issued where known. The authors are especially proud of their watermark variation listings. Much of that is over my head, but the information on the subject of each issue is a nice reference for topical writing. I'll be returning to this book many times.

The popularity of autograph collecting increasingly overlaps many areas of stamp collecting, as Les Winick showed recently in *Scott Stamp Monthly*. That's especially so for the world's most popular topic: space. But a real signature is worth a lot more than one written by a machine. You can identify the latter with Vaughan and Gutzke's booklet.

Astronaut Autopens is being sold by its authors at their cost, as a service to collectors. It can save them money; it can rescue writers from egg on the face, especially during this year when we're expected to hype every space-related collectible. In short, it can help keep space kitsch down to earth.

If you keep all the Postal Service's news releases, you already have nearly everything that's listed in the *Commemorative Cancellation Catalog*, which covers only recent special postmarks of the United States. Nevertheless, because this catalog is indexed by topic, city, and state, it is well worth having.

So far the compilers have published listings from January through August of 1988. Once they have brought it up to date, they plan to do 1987, and to issue complete year indexes.

Modern stampless covers are probably generally considered the dullest philatelic material in existence by most collectors, so Richard Stambaugh's *Hermit Stamp Catalog* isn't likely to have many takers. That's why he printed only 100 copies. A century from now, when this material finally becomes interesting, some publisher will issue a hard-cover reprint edition on archival paper for lots of money.

Chroniclers of postal history shouldn't wait for the expensive reprint. Stambaugh has a lot of interesting material tucked away amid the minutiae, and one of his subjects, business reply mail, will be required reading before completing postage due writeups.

Authors and Poets

BY GEORGE GRIFFENHAGEN

LEXIKON: Dichter und Schriftsteller auf Briefmarken, by Gotthard Feustel. Transpress, VEB Verlag für Verkehrswesen, 13-14 Französische Strasse, 1086 Berlin, German Democratic Republic. 6-1/2" x 9-1/4" hard cover. 300 pages. 1987.

Authors and poets as a theme has been captured in our philatelic literature in a variety of ways. Gottfried Köhler authored a Handbook in 1988 for the Deutschen Motivsammler-Gemeinschaft Motivgruppe on Literature, Theater and Fairy Tales, while Andrew Kwiatkowski continued a checklist of authors and poets in the *JAPGS Bulletin* (Journalists, Authors and Poets) until Gustav Detjen's recent death which was a fatal blow to the JAPOS Study Group. But both checklists are short on biographical data. More detailed biographical sketches of authors and poets here appeared in the West German periodical *Pegasus*, in the British *Lit-Phil* bulletin, and in the Italian *Letteratura* periodical.

This German Democratic Republic book captures in a single volume what the Americans, British, Italians, and West Ger-

mans have attempted to cover over the years in dozens of volumes. Gotthard Feustel presents in alphabetical order short biographical sketches of authors and poets of the world. The author explains in the Introduction that in the 15th-16th century "one did not distinguish between artistic writers and poets and other writers." He adds that "in the 18th century literary writers and poets were defined as a group, but classifications were not the same in various parts of the world--especially in Asia and Latin America." So Feustel established his own criteria for this *Lexikon*, but his explanation confuses more than it helps. For example, he states: "Churchill was chosen as a politician, not as the 1953 Nobel laureate in literature. Leonardo da Vinci was chosen because of his sculptures and art, not because of his literary contributions. Francis of Assisi, Martin Luther King, and Ho Chi Minh were included "for their great influence in the literature of their country." Excluded from the book are the technical literature contributions of medical scientists.

The author claims that the first stamp picturing an author of literary works was issued by Argentina on January 24, 1888, honoring Domingo Faustino Sarmiento. However, the author includes Benjamin Franklin as author of *Poor Richard's Almanac*, and Franklin appears on U.S. stamps as early as 1847.

Accepting the author's criteria for inclusion--even though it may be somewhat fuzzy--the German-language biographical sketches are concise and uniform. Each commences with the date and place of birth, and the date and place of death. Following brief comments on each person's general vocational activities, the author identifies their major contributions to the literature with year date of publication. A surprisingly complete checklist of stamps honoring each biosketch is included.

The typography is pleasing and the text is often supplemented with a black-and-white illustration of a stamp (heavy on DDR stamps and conspicuous by their absence are stamps of BRD), a portrait photograph, or caricature, of each person. Eight full color pages of the "author and poet" stamps of Canada, Finland, France,

German Democratic Republic, Iceland, Italy, Liechtenstein, and Poland are provided at the back of the book along with appendices featuring a checklist alphabetically by country for the "authors and poets" included in the book and the frequency each country honored native vs. foreign "authors."

A listing of the 40 "authors" most often commemorated on postage stamps would have us believe that Churchill (pictured 148 times), Franklin (pictured 62 times), and Ho Chi Minh (pictured 52 times) are the most popular "authors" for stamp issuing entities. Of what we might consider "true authors," those most frequently pictured on stamps are Goethe (40 times), the brothers Grimm (39 times), and Cervantes and Shakespeare (both 34 times).

Civil War Postal History

BY ERNST M. COHN

Confederate States of America-Markings and Postal History of Richmond, Virginia by Peter W. P. Powell. Available from Leonard H. Hartmann, P.O. Box 36006, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-6006. 8" x 10 1/2" hard cover. 178+vii pages, many illustrations. 1987. \$50 postpaid anywhere, or \$60 by air.

According to the publisher, this is a limited edition of 750 that will not be reprinted. The book covers all Richmond postal markings of the Confederate period, the circular date stamps, all auxiliary markings, and the various covers and special usages relating to Richmond.

The book actually contains some early history of the town that was to be the capital of the Confederacy. There is a great deal of postal and other history specifically from the war period, such as a list of post-office personnel, railway depots and some schedules, express companies, prisons, hospitals, and military units.

The main portion of the book concerns detailed considerations of the markings, both cancels and auxiliary stamps; semi-official and official mail; patriotics; flag-of-truce mail; and advertising covers. It appears that the book contains all the

available information for that period either directly or in the form of citations of other works.

Considering the importance of Richmond to the Confederacy, it is not surprising that this is not the first work on the subject. To an outsider like this reviewer, it is not clear whether the work contains substantial new information. In any case, it is a convenient compendium.

The type and the halftone illustrations are clear and useful. The hand-drawn reproductions of postmarks are less to my taste and, while they may annoy potential fakers, are not especially useful for study, either. Proofreading is poor. Paper and binding are excellent. The book is recommended for the specialist.

Philatelic Nostalgia

BY ROBERT L. WENDT

Fun and Profit in Stamp Collecting by Herman Herst Jr. Amos Press, 911 Vandemark Road, Sidney, Ohio 45365. 5-1/4" x 8-1/2" soft cover. 168+vii pages. 1988. ISBN 0-940403-05-6. \$7.95. Hard cover \$15.

Nassau Street by Herman Herst Jr. Amos Press, 911 Vandemark Road, Sidney, Ohio 45365. 5-1/4" x 8-1/2" soft cover. 310+vi pages. 1988. ISBN 0-940403-06-4. \$9.95. Hard cover \$20.

Stamp collecting has been with us for a century and a half, but the golden era and the broadening of the hobby in the USA came after World War I and through the Great Depression. Box top offers of stamps and penny approvals were all the rage. Herman Herst Jr. was very much a part of that scene and his oft-told stories are known to most of us. His career as a stamp dealer fairly well parallels mine as a collector (1929 to date). I sense what he senses in the updating of these books: stamp collecting now competes with many new kinds of recreational pursuits.

Nassau Street is a historical document. Philatelic writers can get a better feel of the past sixty years by reading it. My hardback copy has been at hand for a number of years. **Fun and Profit in Stamp Collecting** could also be entitled **Paradise**. I

don't find this book to be as useful as **Nassau Street**. Some of the problems mentioned (buying mint sheets of commemoratives as investments) are well known to knowledgeable philatelists.

It is unlikely that any of us will write like Pat Herst, or would dare to try. Not many of us have the background, and the storytelling style has seemed to have passed from the scene. Even though the books have been "updated," I believe that this was an endeavor to sell nostalgia. Amos Press could help the hobby by finding new writers.

Allen Donohoe Kerr
1911 - 1989

Allen Donohoe Kerr, age seventy-eight, of Austin, Texas, died May 26, 1989. He began stamp collecting at age six during World War I when two uncles, who were stationed in France, sent him stamps. Over the years his worldwide collection gradually narrowed to the Far East countries and certain British Dominion areas.

His published articles number approximately a thousand. He was inducted into the National Writers Hall of Fame in 1988. Mr. Kerr's research and writing were enhanced by fifteen years in the Far East, living and/or visiting in every country except Mainland China.

He began writing for the **China Clipper**, journal of the China Stamp Society, in the 1940s. Further articles on China were published by the London China Philatelic Society and by the Australian China Philatelic Society. As a charter member and first president of the Society of Indo-China Philatelists, Mr. Kerr had at least one article in every issue of the journal for its first ten years. His four-part handbook, **The Local Overprinted Stamps of Manchuria 1945-47**, is the standard reference for this material. Other articles have appeared in **Japanese Philately**, **Korean Philately**, **Thai Philately**, the **Hong Kong Study Circle** of England, the journal of the French Indo-China Society, **The American Philatelist**, **The Texas Philatelist**, **Topical Time** (cacti and orchids on stamps), and **Stamps Magazine**.

one. He made contributions to the Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue. Mr. Kerr's thesis, *The Development of the Postal System of the Chinese People's Republic 1927-1949*, was published in *The American Philatelic Congress* 1959 yearbook.

At the time of his death, Allen D. Kerr was a member of a number of Far Eastern philatelic specialty societies; the American Philatelic Society; the APS Writers Unit No. 30; the Texas Philatelic Association, Inc.; and the Austin-Texas Stamp Club in Austin, Texas.

Allen Kerr took an active part in organizational philately. He held offices in a number of organizations. He was a director of the Texas Philatelic Association, Inc. for eight years. In 1987 he received the highest honor that the Texas Philatelic Association can bestow on one of its members--The Distinguished Philatelic Texan Award. He served the Austin-Texas Stamp Club as director since 1978, except for the four years he was president.

Over the years, Allen Kerr won many awards in the exhibition arena. His awards were for exhibits on subjects ranging from the postal history of Tibet to orchids on stamps.

The Austin-Texas Stamp Club, Austin, Texas will present the first **Allen D. Kerr Memorial Award** for the Best Far Eastern Exhibit at TEXPEX '90, to be held June 1-3, 1990, in Austin.

A WORD FROM "THE PRODUCER"

This is being composed late afternoon Thursday, Sept. 7, 1989, after all but the "in this issue" feature has been completed for the printer. It has been an interesting experience, making the acquaintance of WordPerfect 5.0. Many laughs, many tears. I survived. Things will continue improving as I gain experience.

The first major problem was that the old Epson QX-16 computer did not have the capacity to do the job as it should be done.

There is now an "IBM Clone" 80386 with 40 meg hard and both sizes floppy drives sitting across the computer room from the veteran QX-16, and the 80386 has been used for nearly all of this issue.

Your comments and suggestions welcomed. The shaded background used for italics will be replaced by proper typeface as soon as possible.

Joe Frye

From page 5

1543 James P. Bender, 48 Overlook Road, Asheville, N.C., 28803-3212. Investigative reporter, Pompano Beach, Fla., [REDACTED]. Sponsor: Ken Lawrence.

1544 Lawrence M. Goldberg, 3436 North Kennicott, Suite 330, Arlington Heights, Ill., 60004. Editor: [REDACTED] (East Africa Study Circle). Sponsor: Steven Rod.

Reinstated

1329 Rob Cuscaden, 127 Anderson Blvd., Geneva, Ill., 60134.

Closed Albums

We regret to report the deaths of the following WU#30 members:

0257 Ellery Denison of Takoma Park, Md., on May 9, at the age of 88. A noted authority in Chinese philately, and a resident of Hong Kong for 10 years, he served for 24 years as president of the China Stamp Society.

0266 Allen D. Kerr of Austin, Tex., on May 26, at the age of 78. He began writing for the *China Clipper* in the 1940s and authored *The Local Overprinted Stamps of Manchuria 1945-47*. Inducted into the Writers Hall of Fame in 1988.

Back issues of *The Philatelic Communicator* are available--subject to supply on hand--as follows, **postpaid**; on receipt of check payable "Writers Unit 30, APS" and sent to me with your order:

1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988 issues--
\$2.50 per single copy, or,
\$10.00 per calendar year.

Please—Advise me of Address Changes!
A few members still don't send them promptly--or at all! Thanks for your help.

George Griffenhagen
WU30 Secretary-Treasurer
2501 Drexel Street
Vienna, VA 22180

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A little detail or two concerning the typography and layout of this issue seems in order. The "Table of Contents" above is the elementary and most basic format available in WordPerfect 5.0, and following issues will be much more detailed, with indexed listings.

The equipment and program have nearly infinite capabilities. The limitation is my own ability to absorb and put to work some of these in a presentable and, I hope, acceptable format for this initial effort.

That seldom-encountered situation for most philatelic editors--complete use of all copy on hand--has occurred at this point. All the text and copy has

been included; all the proofreading has been done (several times); and the printer will receive the camera-ready pages today, Friday, September 8, 1989.

You can see that it has been necessary for me to impose on your patience somewhat more than elsewhere, in order to fill in what would otherwise have been a blank page, and for this necessity I apologise. You need only skip the balance of this page if you find yourself bored.

There are nearly three hundred 'basic' keystroke combinations (codes) listed in the little reference folder accompanying the WordPerfect 5.0 word processing program. It is not simple, but its very complication and extremely wide range of features make it challenging and the result of its use will, I hope, make you agree it was worth the effort and cost.

If any of you have had experience with WP 5.0, I'd like to hear from you, pro or con, as to your experiences and reactions.

As noted elsewhere, I began keyboarding this issue with the old Epson QX-16 computer, and changed to the new "IBM Clone" 80386 turbo job with all the whistles and bells to finish it off.

This issue of our journal has over 17,000 words, according to the speller facility which checks and reports on such matters if you wish it to do so.

Perhaps the statistically-minded might enjoy that little fact.

For those wondering about how things are done in this program, here is what appears in the bottom half of my screen as I write this--the "Reveal Codes" screen, which shows in letters and symbols the hidden codes or instructions keyboarded in with the plain text to be printed, giving orders to computer and printer as to size, shape, etc. of the single character to entire document involved.

"[Col Off][SMALL]The Philatelic Communicator[small][Flsh Rt][SHADW]"

There's much more!

Joe Frye

The Philatelic Communicator
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Secretary-Treasurer's Report

[As of Aug. 10, 1989.]

Election of Officers

The deadline (Aug. 10, 1989) has arrived for the receipt of ballots in the election of WU #30 officers. Here are the results:

President

Robert de Violini	58
Dane S. Clausen	2
Robert A. Greenwald	1
George Griffenhagen	1

Vice-President, East

John T. Nugent	59
Gini Horn	1

Vice-President, West

Thomas G. Current	61
-------------------	----

Secretary-Treasurer

George Griffenhagen	61
---------------------	----

Council Members (1989-1993)

Janet Klug	62
George M. Martin	59
Russel V. Skavaril	58
William L. Welch	61
C. W. Christianson	1
Charles Fricke	1
Duane Koenig	1
Ken Lawrence	1

Thus, your newly-elected officers are:

President Robert de Violini, Oxnard, Cal.
V.P., East John Nugent, Meriden, Conn.
V.P., West T.G. Current, Portland, Ore.
Sec.-Treas. George Griffenhagen, Vienna, Va.

Chairman, Council Joe Frye, Memphis, Tenn.
Council Members (1987-1991)

Ernst Cohn, Dothan, Ala.
Diana Manchester, Columbus, Ohio
S. J. Rod, South Orange, NJ

Council Members (1989-1993)

Janet Klug, Pleasant Plain, Ohio
George M. Martin, Yakima, Wash.
R. V. Skavaril, Columbus, Ohio
W. L. Welch, State College, PA.

Editor

Ken Lawrence, Jackson, Miss.

Welcome

We welcome the following new members who have joined WU#30 since our last report:

1538 John Timothy Lindholm, 42 Glendale Avenue, Fremont, Ohio 43420. Pro-tem editor The Posthorn. Sponsor: George Griffenhagen.

1539 Robert G. Zeigler, 9122 Behner Brook Court, Indianapolis, Ind. 46250. Columnist Tell and currently writing Handbook of Swiss Philately. Sponsor: Cheryl Ganz.

1540 Michael F. Schreiber, P.O. Box 613, Troy, Ohio 45373. Staff writer: Linn's. Sponsor: Ken Lawrence.

1541 Ernest A. Austin, P.O. Box 3717, Cherry Hill, N.J., 08034-0571. Author and editor: The Black American Stamp Album. Sponsor: Ken Lawrence.

1542 Joe Kraus, P.O. Box 55328, Stockton, Calif. 95205. Editor: The Autograph Collector's Magazine. Sponsor: Ken Lawrence.

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